From: Veronica Sarkissian
To: HSSframework
Subject: Armenian Genocide
Date: Sunday, November 23, 2014 6:45:14 PM

Dear Board Members,
As a retired California Credentialed teacher I have been made aware of changes to the History taught California children about the Armenian Genocide. I support the Armenian Genocide project and their efforts to make known these problems:

We urgently request your help to insure that the Armenian Genocide is included in the History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools.

1. The current framework's first reference to the Armenian Genocide, which we urge the BoE to reinstate, is found in the 10th Grade World History section 10.5 (pg. 125). It states:
Within the context of human rights and genocide, students should learn of the Ottoman government's planned mass deportation and systematic annihilation of the Armenian population in 1915. Students should also examine the reactions of other governments, including that of the United States, and world opinion during and after the Armenian genocide. They should examine the effects of the genocide on the remaining Armenian people, who were deprived of their historic homeland, and the ways in which it became a prototype of subsequent genocides.

The new draft shortens the reference above substantially, removing important historical context and instructions regarding aspects of the Armenian Genocide that should be examined, including the effects of the genocide on remaining Armenians, the loss of their homeland, the response by the U.S. and other nations, and the fact that the Armenian Genocide was the prototype for subsequent genocides. Also, the term "Turkish government" or "Young Turks" should be added to the text, to clarify the identity of the perpetrators, because simply using "Ottoman government" is unclear.
The new draft states (in Chapter 5, pg. 301):
The Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian empires had collapsed and in their place, independent states emerged. Before the fighting had ended, Armenians were expelled from Ottoman Turkey and forcefully marched to the Middle Eastern desert. The Young Turk government created a systematic program to exterminate the Armenians as a people,which has come to be known as the Armenian Genocide.

2. Both the current and draft framework include the following standard, 10.5.5, which we urge the BoE include and even augment:
Discuss human rights violations and genocide, including the Ottoman government's actions against Armenian citizens.
We urge the BoE to augment this standard by requiring students to identify the Turkish leadership of the Ottoman Empire, discuss the effects of the genocide on the Armenian people, the response by the U.S. and other nations, and how it influenced future major human rights crises.

3. In the current framework, there is a third reference to the Armenian Genocide which has been removed in the new draft, and we urge the BoE to restore it, because it addresses the importance of historical remembrance in the the continuum of modern genocide. Within the section about WWII and the Holocaust, it states

Additional Recommendations:
In 2012, The Genocide Education Project, sent the BoE the attached recommendations for the new draft framework. The recommendations go beyond the references to the Armenian Genocide mentioned above, and include a number of other areas where information about Armenians would be appropriate to include. The suggestions apply to the 4th grade, 10th grade, and 11th grade frameworks.

Reference Material:
The draft framework and other information is here http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/hs/cf/
The currently-used framework is
here: http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/histsocsciframe.pdf - search=history social science framework&view=FitH&pagemode=none

Than you for your consideration,

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